Lt Leitner L-3 (1866-68) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3

Gilgitis. When a person is dead, the Mulla, assisted generally by a near friend of the deceased, washes the body which is then placed in a shroud. Women assemble, weep and relate the virtues of the deceased. The body is conveyed to the grave the very day of the decease. In Astor there is something in the shape of a bier for conveying the dead. At Gilgit two poles, across which little bits of wood are placed sideways and then fastened, serve for the same purpose. The persons who carry the body think it a meritorious act. The women accompany the body for some fifty yards and then return to the house to weep. The body is then placed in the earth which has been dug up to admit of its interment. Sometimes the grave is well-cemented and a kind of small vault is made over it with pieces of wood closely jammed together. A Pir or saint receives a hewn stone standing as a sign-post from the tomb. I have seen no inscriptions anywhere. The tomb of one of their famous saints at Gilgit has none. I have heard people there say that he was killed at that place in order to provide the country with a shrine. My Gilgiti who, like all his countrymen, was very patriotic, denied it, but I heard it at Gilgit from several persons, among whom was one of the descendants of the saint. As the Saint was a Kashmiri, the veracity of his descendant may be doubted. To return to the funeral. The body is conveyed to the cemetery, which is generally at some distance from the village, accompanied by friends. When they reach the spot the Mulla reads the prayers standing as in the "Djenazi"—any genuflexion, "ruku" رکوع and prostration are, of course, inadmissible. After the body has been interred the Mulla recites the Fatiha, [opening prayer of the Koran] all people standing up and holding out their hands as if they were reading a book. The Mulla prays that the deceased may be preserved from the fire of hell as he was a good man, etc. Then after a short benediction the people separate. For three days at Gilgit and seven days at Astor the near relatives of the deceased do not eat

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eye, rain-making, curse, and so on, I shall not here attempt to deal. 128

The first or animate category may be analysed as including :—

1. Beings whose supernatural operations are observable in ordinary daily life—the LIVING SUPERNATURAL. These may be superhuman or non-human beings, or they may be ordinary human beings.

2. Beings whose operations are chiefly found enshrined in folk tales—the "LEGENDARY" or "LITERARY" SUPERNATURAL. These may be regarded as superhuman or non-human.

At the top of the scale of the Superhuman, the God of Islam under his Persian name KHUDA appears to have created all rivals. Only among the Burushaski-speaking peoples are there traces of more primitive animal spirits, or spirits assuming animal forms, treated as objects of reverence or worship. The name under which their memory has been preserved is Bŏyo. This I believe to be the plural of a singular form Bŏ.in, but I should just mention that this is a point on which doubt is possible. 776

Among the Shina speakers the principal forms of superhuman being are sometimes referred to collectively in a phrase of association as "*Jinn, dŏ.ŏ, peri*".

Jinn as a foreign (Arabic) word of Islamic origin is given rather a wide and vague application, but Dŏ.ŏs and Peris can be roughly differentiated as demons and fairies.

The term Rāchi is generally used of inanimate protective objects, which belong to the impersonal side of magic, but in the form Rāchi it possesses also a personal significance. 778 ●

Chhĕ is the name of an important type of apparitional supernatural. 775

Whether Ghosts, the Spirits of the Dead, are to be reckoned as human or superhuman is a nice question. They are, I suppose, in fact sub-human. They seem to be recognised under the foreign (Arabic) title of Arwāḥ, but to play no very active part in popular belief.

2: Lorimer L-3 (1920-24) 1929 AV3 Dard AV3

there by the local people till a few years ago, when it was stopped, I think, by the orders of the Mir of Hunza. Animals were slaughtered there "in the name of the Bōyo".

From a story of Hunza tribal history it appears that the Bōyo were regarded as the avengers of broken oaths taken in their names. In a dispute about the ownership of land between two brothers Khuru and Khamer, Khamer proposed that the case should be decided by their taking oath. Khuru, the weaker party, who was also incidentally in the right, agreed and said: "O brother, the Sahāla Bō.in and the Hālasa Bō.in are very powerful and they are quick to wrath." But Khamer, who meditated a ramp and had no mind to be caught in this way, would not even hear this proposal out. "If we swear by them," he said, "they will work us evil." So the idea was dropped and with it disappeared our chance of learning the methods of taking oath by the Bōyo.[1]

The Bōyo now bear the stigma attaching to the gods of a superseded religion. "Bōyo-worshipper" (bōyo ā.llikinas) is now used in the sense of heathen, pagan.

There seems to be a special association between the Bōyo and trees, and the trees share in their sanctity. Whether they each have their own independent virtue, or whether the one owes its worshipfulness in any measure to the merits of the other it is impossible to say.

In the two remaining texts in which I have references to the Bōyo the associate tree plays an important part. In a statement made in Ṣhiṇa by Ṣōbahdār Sulṭān 'Alī of Nagir regarding certain popular practices at Chapṛōt he said: "Further they say that all the people used to assemble to do worship to a pine-tree that was there. They used to take a grey goat and slay it at the foot of the tree and a great

[1] I have here accepted the relation of Bō.in and Bōyō as singular and plural which is morphologically quite in order, and is asserted by some, though denied by other, authorities. The word bō.in seems to survive in bō.inḍēgas (pl. bō.in dēgaṛā) which was explained as arwāḥ—the spirits of the dead. Dēg-, occurring in other compounds, appears to refer to a dead person.

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number of puppy-dogs used to come out from below the pine-tree to drink up the blood. Then the people used to return rejoicing to their homes, and they used to say among themselves: 'Thanks be! Sickness has now been banished from the country.'"

Here it is stated that the tree is worshipped, but that the puppies, who are doubtless the Bōyo, benefit by the sacrifice. The Ṣhiṇa word (śilō.iki) translated "worship" means to *appease, placate, propitiate, do reverence to.* It corresponds, I think, exactly to the Burushaski *-ilikinas.

The other story, in which the tree also plays the chief rôle, is briefly as follows: From ancient times there was a juniper-tree in the garden of a man called Keramo Derbēsh, living in the Dirāmiting territory. It was called the Bōyo Gal ("the Bōyo juniper"). It was said that formerly animals like puppy-dogs used to come out from under it. The people of Hunza used to propitiate them (worship them) and called them Bōyo. One, Bagher Tham, cut the tree down and he promptly died. Two stems grew up again from the stump and a man cut one of them. He became paralyzed and an idiot. A man called Māmad Shāh cut down the remaining bough and he fell down from a cliff and was killed. After this people were afraid to meddle with the tree and left one bough (not previously mentioned) unmolested. Last year and the preceding year (1923 and 1922) this bough was still *in situ*. Then a man Yaqīn, obtained permission from the owner (Keramo Derbēsh) and cut it down and took it to his house. But he had a dream in which a number of women appeared to him and asked him why he had cut down their juniper-tree, and intimidated him. In view of past history he became alarmed and returned the juniper bough to its original owner, Keramo Derbēsh, in whose house it now lies, for no one will venture to burn it.

Here we are left wondering whether there was any connection, other than topographical, between the juniper and the

2: Lorimer L-3 (1920-24) 1929 AV3 Dard AV3

Bōyo, and whether the ladies who resented the ill-treatment of the tree were an original dream-invention of Yaqīn's or were personages already known to the public. 776 778

This is all the information I can give about the Bōyo. As far as I know they have no counterpart in the present-day beliefs of the Shina-speaking peoples.

We next come to the association of the JINN, DE.Ū, PERI. The name Jinn, as already stated, is not an authentic local title, but has been derived from Islamic sources. It is used rather vaguely for all beings of the apparitional order. The popular mind is probably not very clear about the exact nature of all the supernatural phenomena which it encounters, and welcomes a non-committal term carrying all the flavour of high religious sanction. There are many stories in which Jinn appear, and it is probable that the foreign name has brought with it some foreign conceptions and associations. I am inclined to regard them with suspicion, though in the main I believe them to be merely re-christened Çhèçh and perhaps Dē.ūs. 776 177

Another foreign (Arabic) term, Balā, seems to be used even more vaguely for evil spirits or demons whose presence you suspect or perceive, but whom you have not yet clearly seen and to whom you cannot put a name.

On the other hand a third foreign (Arabic) name, Shaiṭān, seems to carry with it a more definite personality. Shaiṭān is a leader among malignant and malicious spirits, at least a demon with an individuality, the Devil, Satan. He is probably a foreign intruder. On these foreign or denationalized Devils whose antecedents are somewhat suspect I shall not here spend time.

I may just mention by way of illustration that if after "concocting" magic, a process which takes forty days, you then sit down in the open and draw a line round yourself on the ground, a Jinn will appear and try to frighten you. If you keep up your courage other Jinns, Dē.ūs and Peris will come and try to frighten you. Finally if you remain firm 776 789

2: Lorimer L-3 (1920-24) 1929 AV3 Dard AV3

I have recorded instances of human-peri marriages in Chitrāl, but that lies outside our present beat.

Rāçh

The term rāçh, cf. the Sanskrit root *rakṣ-*, "to protect," is usually applied to material objects, which exercise protective powers over human beings. Among such objects are included articles worn as talismans. It is also said, however, that everyone has a guardian spirit in the form of a small girl—Rāçhe Mulai.i, or Rāçhi. There may be two of them. These Rāçhi communicate with the Pashū or Anti-witch when their protégés are in danger.

Again, if a bad woman rides on a horse the horse's Rāçhi is depressed. Here the Rāçhi was explained as the *sitāra*, "star" or "fortune", but it is not therefore to be assumed that it is an impersonal abstraction. The conception of a man's "luck" or "fortune" as a living being who is sometimes asleep and sometimes awake is very common.

In a Burushaski story there are three women who are the "Guardians" (rāçhakūyo) of a king of Irān. They know his fate beforehand and how he can escape it, but are not in direct communication with him. This story, however, is obviously of foreign origin, at least in its existing form, and the guardian women are an integral part of it and could hardly have been introduced as an afterthought.

Chèçh

We now pass to a very active and vital group of the Living Supernatural—the Chèçh. The name is not identifiable as a foreign loan-word and has all the appearance of being good Shina. If I am right in believing the ch's to be cerebral, they would ordinarily correspond to Sanskrit kṣ or tr, but I cannot suggest a deriyation.

Chèçh appear to me to present features of interest and originality, but they may be commonplace to the instructed folklorist. I shall first mention some of the chief characteristics and then illustrate them by specific examples.

3: Muhammad G-3 (ca. 1900) 1907 AV3 Dard AV3

V.

The Ceremony of Nagi Suchemi.

Nagi Suchemi is said to be a goddess who lived at Nangam in the Astore district, on a stone altar situated at the foot of the Nagishi hill. In former times cases of theft requiring settlement by oath were decided by the defendant's swearing on this sacred platform in the following manner. A man called Jungmi was specially appointed by the Rá to accompany the defendant to the place, receiving eight yards of cloth from the suspected person. A she-goat was killed on the altar and the meat cooked and eaten by all those present, in utensils which were always kept and are still kept there. The defendant had now to utter the following words loudly: "O Nagi Sochemi, inflict punishment upon me if I am guilty of the crime, but, if the plaintiff has laid a false claim upon me, be so kind as to inflict a calamity on him!" They then returned quietly to their homes in the darkness of night. None of the men who had attended this solemnity were allowed to appear in daylight before others of the village, and if by chance one of them showed himself to any villager, he had to repay whatever loss there arose from the theft, or from any untoward circumstance happening to the discoverer of the offending juryman at dawn of that day. For some days the case was left awaiting the decision of "Nagi Sochemi," and if in this period the suspected person suffered any kind of loss of property, of relatives, etc., he was adjudged guilty, and the total amount of loss by the theft was recovered from him and repaid to the plaintiff.

"Khuran" or "Majari."

In Chilas and in the adjacent valleys of Jalkot, Palas, Koli, Darel, Tangir, Gor, Harban, and Sazin, the disputes between two individuals or parties are settled by a peculiar ceremony called "Khuran" in Shinaki (Chilas, Darel, Tangir, Gor, Harban and Sazin), and "Majari" in Kohistan (Jalkot, Palas, and Koli). By this ceremony each of the opposite parties has to prove itself wealthier than the other, and whichever proves to be the poorer is forced to submit to the other. The ceremony is performed by each party giving food to all the villagers at a place called "Kai." Whichever party provides the larger feast gains the day, while the other must needs submit.

VI.

Danyals.

There are some men and women of these parts who are called Danyals. When they are worked up into a state of frenzy the giants and fairies instruct them concerning the future of the country, the chiefs, etc. Whenever a chief is inquisitive on the subject of his future, he sends for the Danyals as well as the local musicians. A bundle of green chili leaves is then brought, and some of these, with a little *ghi*, are put into a small fire and burnt in an enclosure set apart for the purpose. As soon as the smoke rises, one or two Danyals push their way towards the fire and begin to inhale the smoke, until

YĀTHINI

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Adjacent to and on the southern side of Basin, a village about three miles west of Gilgit, there stands a cliff at the junction of the Kargah and Naupur nullahs. A large image of an erect Buddha has been sculptured on the rock-face, about 30 feet above the ground. It is without doubt a sculpture of ancient date and shows that the valley was once inhabited by a race professing Buddhism. The people call it "Yāthini" (giantess), and relate an interesting story about it. They say that she was the sister of Shri Badat, a King of Gilgit who was the descendant of giants. She lived on the said rock and, being a man-eater like her brother, was in the habit of killing and devouring half as many of the men as happened to pass by, leaving the other half unmolested. The princess continued this practice for a long period, to the great distress of the inhabitants, until a certain Danyal named Soglio, feeling the loss of so many people dear to his heart, devised a successful plan of murdering her in order to save his beloved countrymen. With the above design in his mind he set out for the place with a party of brave and bold men. Reaching the spot he burnt a small fire at the foot of the said rock, and his companions took their seat around it in a small circle. The Danyal, according to his usual custom, put some *chili* (juniper) leaves on the fire and inhaled its smoke. Thus driving himself into a state of ecstacy, he commenced dancing and singing some magic incantations, which were repeated by his companions. The Yāthini was elated at the prospect of more victims. As soon as she approached the Danyal he stepped forward and addressed her in a song, of which the following is a translation :—

"Have not you heard, O lovely princess, that your father has expired to-day?" Hearing this sad news, she struck her breast with her right hand. Soglio, who had with him some long iron nails, thrust one of them through her hand, as it lay on her breast, with such rapidity and strength that the nail penetrated her chest and went far into the rock behind. Soglio then sang another song, in which he sang as follows :—"Have not you heard, O charming princess, that your brother has also died to-day? On this she struck her second hand on her thigh. Soglio quickly pierced this with another sharp nail. The Yāthini was thus firmly fixed to the rock, and was unable to move, or to take revenge. The party was much delighted at this success of the Danyal who further turned her into a stone by his prayer, and even more delighted were the inhabitants when they heard of the good news. The unfortunate Soglio requested the people to bury him on his death near the Yāthini, as otherwise she would return to life and continue her cruelties. The people, who had now obtained their desire, held a private council to discuss the matter. They argued that no one could tell when and where Soglio would die, and whether they would be alive or able to procure his body at the time, should he die in some far-away country or by drowning in the river; in which case the Yāthini would recommence her practices with renewed ferocity. After a long debate they thought it best to assassinate Soglio at once. A man was appointed to accomplish the horrible task, which he did, and Soglio was at the same time buried close to the figure on the rock.

773 keep trust in Provision, who was a servant of everybody. On this the Yaths sent "Trust" to the wolf, and he came with him to the ruler of the Yaths. The object was explained to him and he said that a bird called Garai Patan, who lived on the snows on the Coxus Mountain, should be sent for at once. Provision was first made the messenger; but the bird declined to come; whereupon Trust was sent to him and he came to see Bojare Shal and Yamlo Hal Singh. Bojare Shal now sent for a mouse which lived close to his home. When everything was ready the wolf gave orders that Yamlo Hal Singh should stand in water as a pillar upon which Gorai Pattan should spread his wings, while the mouse by the making a hole into the ice should bring out and spread all the soil over the wings of Gorai Pattan. The orders were obeyed and the wings of the bird covered all the water, while the mouse brought out all the soil which was beneath the water. In this way the earth was turned over the water.

X.*

"Neelo But" (The Blue Stone).

643 778 There used to be at Gilgit a blue stone called "Neelo But," about a yard square, where the present telegraph office is situated. No king was acknowledged in the country unless he had resorted to it and prostrated himself before the stone. There and then the people adorned his head with a crown, swore fealty and tendered their allegiance. This was the day when all the better class would gather to see the new "Rá" perform all the ceremonies, and undergo all obligations considered necessary to the office of leader of the nation. This was done in order to secure their confidence by a man who was to become sole director over their destinies, among them being many who had taken an active part in bringing him to the throne and proclaiming him their chief.

When the ceremonies were over, all came one by one to kiss his hands, to receive his blessings and to bless him in return. They would then dance to the beating of drums, make merry, sing praises and recite poems describing the heroic deeds already performed by the Rá, his ancestors and others whose lives had become endeared to all by self-sacrifice in the cause of their country.

[787] The *damyal* (soothsayer) was not left out on this occasion, for it was necessary to foretell the future of the king and his courtiers, and to exhibit the state of ecstacy that accompanies prophecy by the soothsayer. Before being dismissed at night all present partook of a feast; some were gratified with handsome *khilats* and other distinctions; some gratified by a gesture of kindliness

The Ceremony of Shri Bai.

778 796 842 782 Shri Bai is the name of a goddess who, as the people say, lived on a rock at Nangam, a village in the Astore district. The rock too is called Shri Bai, and is always kept covered with branches of juniper, while an attendant called "Boh Bin" resides there to look after it. Barren women used to sacrifice goats to and pray before the sacred stone in the hope of progeny. In the hot weather, when the people had gathered their

* [See also p. 103 *antea*.—Ed.]

3: Muhammad G-3 (ca. 1900) 1907 AV3 Dard AV3

crops, the female population of the village proceeded to the Devi in their best attire. They sang on their way, and when they reached their destination presented a goat to the "Boh Bin." He then threw up some small branches of the juniper in the air, and the women attempted to catch them before they fell to the ground. It was believed that a woman would be blessed with as many children as the branches she succeeded in catching. Descendants of the original "Boh Bin" still remain, but the ceremony is no longer observed.

A stone of this kind is also found at Barmas near Gilgit. The ceremony performed upon this stone was exactly the same as stated above, but it has a different name, *viz*: "Mulkum."

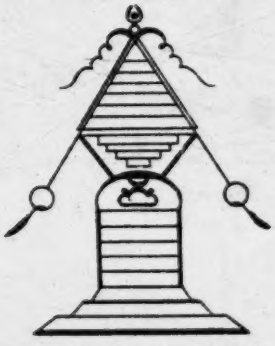
"Rato" or "Chili."

At Farfuh, a village in the Bagrot valley, there are five small portions of land situated at the foot of a mountain and called Chuto Rato, Shilo Rato, Surgon Rato, Chilko Rato and Thoko Rato. In these tracts there are five very large boulders and five small stones, called respectively "Dev-ai-Maron" and "Mos Samaran Ken" (*i.e.*, stone for distributing flesh). Here the "Rato" ceremony, also called "Chili," used to be performed as follows. During the first six days of the ceremony, which lasted for seven days, the people wore new and clean clothes, the sexes being separated and inhabiting different houses. On the seventh or the last day, all the people of the different communities or families of the village assembled separately and went to their respective "Ratos" with a goat and some young branches of the chili or *Juniperus macrocarpa*. These branches were placed upon the "Dev-ai-Maron," and the blood of the goat which was now sacrificed was thrown on. The meat was placed on the "Mos Samaran Ken" and distributed among those present, who roasted and ate it at the same place. It was never given to any woman or to a man of any family other than that of "Rato." The shoulder-blade of the goat killed was then placed on a high stone and fired at by marksmen amidst the noisy acclamations of the people, and a dance was held in honour of the sacred ceremony. After this the people assembled round the "Dev-ai-Maron," while the oldest man present or the headman of the village sat quite close to the stone and addressed it in the following manner: "O iron-like Rato, O Shri Bagartham, we have come to thee to express our wants. We have no progeny: kindly endow us with children. We are destitute of money: kindly favour us with gold and silver. We are in want of grain: please supply us." In the same manner he related all their desires for cattle, clothes, goods, etc., while the other men followed him and expressed their assent to what he said by crying "Amen." The women of the village now appeared in their best attire, with some dry flour and small flat loaves. They threw the *atta* on the *chili* branches and prayed in the same manner for the fulfilling of their desires. The loaves were distributed among the men, who eat and rejoiced. At some places the women were strictly prohibited from going near the Rato stone. This ceremony was performed and known by the same name throughout the whole of Gilgit, but on stones of different names, so that the stones at Datuchi and Bulchi were called "Aju Bin," at Sinakar "Shri Bin," at Gilgit and Dainyor "Rato-denaken," and at Naugam "Shri Bai." The

000 "Shri Bai" ceremony, performed with a slight difference at Naugam, will be dealt with separately.

Sculptured Stones.*

532 174 778 On the bank of the Indus river a big stone is seen about a mile's distance from the entrance of Botugah Nullah (Chilas Nullah) where there stand some boatmen's huts. It bears a figure of a Buddhist *Mane* [?]. The carving begins a little above the foot of the stone. In height it is a little larger than a man. Though faintly engraved, it is so skilfully whitened that, although it has been exposed for so long a time to the action



of the weather, its white colour is still to be remarked from a distance. On this rock there are also many other figures of the same kind, but they are somewhat smaller in size than the one above mentioned. Some two or three miles below this place, there are numerous stones of various sizes on the river bank bearing the figures of goats and markhors, &c. Some of the stones show representations of axes, while the others are those of deer. At some places the carvings are seen on the top of a stone as well as on its sides. The same kind of figures are also seen in the Bagrot Valley engraved on rock-faces between the Sanikar and Bulchi villages.[1]

At Barmas, near Damot, in the Sai valley, there are two pictures of Buddha. One is carved on a stone, and the other is a painting of Buddha sitting among his disciples.

At another place, in the neighbourhood of Chilas, there is a rock still larger in size, and on its river side there are a good many figures. There are also two or three carvings of temples with a large number of men, goats, horses and cows, &c., engraved on them. On this stone there is an inscription written in some ancient character. The same carvings are noticed for some way along the river, which here does not rise sufficiently in summer to do them any injury. It shows that in a certain period, this part of Chilas was inhabited by Buddhists. The inhabitants of Chilas are under the impression that all these inscriptions are made by the fairies.[2] The tradition is that in ancient times the land was

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[1] These villages are situated in the Leepar Valley.

[2] [A similar belief is held by the Malays (Mahammadans) of Lower Siam and Pahang regarding the "Orang Parai" (Peris), and certain clay tablets of Buddhistic origin found in caves. See Skeat, *Man*, 1902, No. 125.—Ed.]

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*[See also p. 106 *ante*.—Ed.]

frequently visited by fairies who used to make these inscriptions, as in the opinion of the Chilasis it is beyond man's power to produce such inscriptions. It is also affirmed that these fairies were seen in those days by all men, but nowadays they are visible to no one except to a great Mullah by dint of his miracles. The Bagrot people say that the carvings were inscribed on stones by the fairies on the night of "Shino Bazono;" and that on the same night the fairies frequently used to rub away the figures from one stone and to engrave the same on another.

The Ceremony of Sri Kun.

Sri Kun is said to be the sister of Nagi Sochemi, and lived at Shankank, a village near Godai in the District of Astore. The villagers used to present goats to this goddess and prayed before her seat for the supply of their wants. Her followers were strictly prohibited from keeping cows, or drinking their milk, and were under the impression that by so doing they were apt to lose their flocks, herds, or the produce of their lands.

"Jainkish" and "Dewaro."

At Gilgit proper and in the surrounding villages there are seen two small tracts of land called "Jainkish" and "Dewaro." The former is situated on the river bank and the latter at the foot of a hill, except at some places in which they both are found at the foot of a hill. In ancient times, when Islam had not spread to these parts, the tribes used to burn the dead at "Jainkish," and a few days after they gathered and carried away the bones to "Dewaro," where they buried them in one pit. Remnants of bones still mark these places, though the traces have almost been obliterated by time. In these circumstances, however, one is not wrong in supposing that Muhammadanism is of recent growth.

Several old men still living at Gilgit relate that they used to play with the brass bangles and rings which they found in "Jainkish;" but to carry away such articles to their houses was considered improper. From this it appears that the dead bodies were burnt with their ornaments.

Sankar Village and a "Chinar" Tree.

There is a small populous village named Sankar in the Bagrot Valley. It is said that when this tract was lying waste, a Fakir named Shah Burya passed through and halted there for a short time. Becoming thirsty and finding no water, he prayed to God for a good supply. His prayer was granted, and a sufficient quantity of water burst forth from an adjacent hill. After a few days Shah Burya felt the heat of the sun, and planting his stick, which was of *chinar* wood, deep into the ground, prayed again to the Almighty to make it into a large *chinar* tree. This prayer was also granted, and a big tree grew, under whose shadow he afterwards used to sit. The branches of this tree are said to have been once so large and spreading that they touched the neighbouring hill about 600 yards distant, across the Bagrot Nullah. The tree was afterwards burnt by the Mongols, but after a short period five shoots sprang out from its trunk, and these are still to be seen, forming an enclosure about 30 yards wide.

A Pearl Tree on the Deobani Mountain.

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On the east of Tashot, a village in the Bagrot Valley, there stands a snow-covered mountain called Deobani. The people say that there is a large pearl tree on its top, which is the property of the fairies and giants. A good mountaineer is said to have once reached its summit. Gathering a load of the pearls, he started down towards his home. But he was surprised to see a crowd of giants and fairies coming after him, and, being frightened by their approach, he thought it better to throw away all the pearls in order to save his life; he was surprised, however, to find that a fairy still followed him as far as his house. There he closed his door. While changing his clothes he found that a pearl was hidden in his shoes. The pearl was then thrown towards the fairy; she picked it up and disappeared. A similar story is related about Nanga Parbat, a mountain on the west of Astor.

Shangali Ween.

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At about two miles east of Danyore, a village about three miles east of Gilgit, there is seen on the northern side of the road leading to the Bagrot Valley a small piece of ground about one yard square surrounded by walls about three feet high. This place is called "Shangali Ween" (place of putting chain). It is said that there used to be a golden chain hanging in the air without any support. In ancient times, when any case was to be decided on oath, both the parties were carried there and each of them addressed the chain in the following manner: "O *Sayio Shangali* (sacred chain), whoever of us is sinful please accuse him by striking his neck; and the chain used miraculously to whirl round the neck of the man who was guilty. The man was then convicted and punished by the authorities according to law. No chain is now found at the spot, and the people relate an interesting story about its disappearance. They say that two men of the Bagrot Valley were once coming together to Gilgit: one of them had brought some gold with him which the other succeeded in stealing. Making a small hole in his stick, he put the gold secretly into it. The men, after a long quarrel about the lost gold, decided that the case should be settled by the Shangali. When they were entering the place, the guilty man gave his stick which contained the gold to the other, and they both began to beg before the Shangali, asking that, whichever of them had gold in his possession, he might be struck by the Shangali. The Shangali, who was aware of the trick, was much enraged at this attempt to deceive, and, considering itself offended, at once disappeared for ever without settling their case. The loser of gold was now very angry, and in a fit of his anger struck the stick on the walls of the enclosure. The stick broke and the lost gold was disclosed.

Nong and Chakrot Bari.

778 789 823

Near Laos village in the Astor district there is a small fountain called Nong. The people consider it a sacred one and offer sacrifices at the place for the fulfilment of their wants. If owing to drought a loss of their crops is expected, or if for any other reason heavy rain is required, the people used to throw some unclean thing into the spring, such as the bone of a dog; it then began to rain, and continued until the object was taken out. Owing to the belief that the spring was sacred and, moreover, able

3: Muhammad G-3 (ca. 1900) 1907 AV3 Dard AV3

to inflict harm upon the people, they themselves did not dare to put an unclean thing into the spring; and therefore on such occasions a foreigner was employed to perform this act, receiving as remuneration a large quantity of grain collected for the purpose at the rate of two seers per house. After receiving this grain he threw some unclean thing into the spring; and took it out when the rain was no more required. There are two other similar springs: one in the Bagrot Valley, called Chakrot Bari; and the other near the Tarshing village in the Astor District, called Komachon uts.

778 789 823

"Rashoo ai Yudaini."

(The Fairies' Drum of Rashoo.)

The Doms of Bulchhi, a village in the Bagrot Valley, have still in their possession a small drum about one foot in diameter and three feet in circumference. This is called "Rashoo ai Yudaini." It was once carefully kept in a handsome cover by Rashoo, a Rono Wazir of Gilgit, who had ruled for the chief in that place. It is said, that whenever Rashoo intended to advance against any chief, the Yudaini was brought and kept before him. If it made a noise, without having been beaten by anybody, Rashoo believed it an omen of success. But if it were silent, Rashoo postponed his expedition.

534 539 778 721

The Hoof Mark of a Horse.

Between Edgah and Balan villages in the Astore district there are seen on a rock near the old road which faces the Phina village, a few small flags. It is said that at this place there is a mark on a stone of the hoof of a horse. The story of the hoof-print is this—The place was once haunted by a giantess, who was a bitter enemy of mankind, and had become the terror of the people. The people wished to get rid of her. By the providence of God, one day a venerable Darwesh—some say that the Darwesh was no one else but Hazrat Khizar himself—halted on the river-bank close to the foot of the Phina village, and saw the giantess across the stream. He flung himself on his horse and, spurring it vigorously, came upon the giantess with the speed of lightning. She had no alternative left but to take to her heels, which she did, leaving the noise of her shrieks behind, and was never seen again. The horse had come upon it with such a vigour that the stone gave way under its weight, and there burst forth from the stone a spring of cool, fresh water. Though there exists no trace of it now, it is still looked upon as a sacred place, and the people from far and near gather together annually to celebrate the event by killing a sheep, feasting upon it, and making merry.

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XI.

The Foot of Malik the Rá of Gilgit.[1]

It is said that one of the feet of Malik, an ancient Rá of Gilgit, was naturally formed like the hoof of an ass. He took great care to conceal this defect from all people. One of his old servants had, however, a knowledge of the mystery; but he was strictly forbidden by the Rá to disclose the secret. The servant kept it from becoming known

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[1] [Cf. the Greek story of Midas and his ears, and of how their asinine form was revealed to the people.—Ed.]

22 Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AU1 Afghanistan AU1
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when the drum is heard; if he did so, some evil would be certain to happen to the daring individual, the least he could expect would be that his head would be twisted round to his back, and remain so for the rest of his life. A warlike expedition undertaken without the sounding of the Yoodeni drum would certainly end in disaster.

Trial by appeal to the ordeal of fire is still practised. Seven paces are measured, and a red-hot axe-head is placed on the open palm of the accused, on which a green leaf has first been spread. He must then deposit the hot iron at the spot appointed seven paces distant, and should any mark of a burn remain on his hand, it is a proof of guilt. The Vakeel of the Thum of Hunza on one occasion offered to subject himself to the ordeal before me, in order to clear his master of a false accusation.

Magic has a prominent place in Dard ideas, and many individuals are credited with the power of exercising magical arts. The rulers of Hunza and Nager are credited by their subjects with the power of producing rain. During a very severe winter I captured a full-grown markhor, which had wandered during the night into the cultivated land. The occurrence being unusual, the animal was at once regarded as a *jin*, and a deputation came to me shortly after it was captured, asking me to release it lest it should bring misfortune on the place. The death of the Wuzeer, which happened unexpectedly a few days afterwards, is still ascribed to the occurrence. Written charms are in great request, and every person wears one or more suspended to different parts of the dress by circular brass buckles. Those most in demand are charms conferring invulnerability and courage on the wearer. Charms are also attached to the mane and forelock of favourite horses. Certain springs are supposed to have the power of causing tempests if anything impure, such as a cowskin, is placed in them. This seems to have been an old and widely-spread superstition. Baber mentions it in his memoirs. "Some books mention that in Ghazni there is a fountain, into which if any filth or ordure be thrown, immediately there rises a tempest and hurricane with snow and rain."[1] The same is mentioned by another writer.[2] "Many days elapsed without the opponents having engaged each other, when it was mentioned to Mahmood that in the camp of Jeipal was a spring into which if a mixture of ordure should be thrown, the sky would immediately become overcast, and a dreadful

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778 storm of hail and wind arise. Mahmood having caused this
821 to be done, the effects became visible; for, instantly the sky lowered, and thunder, lightning, wind, and hail succeeded, turning the day into night, and spreading horror and destruction around."

D
787 Divination is still practised, in spite of the conversion of the country to Mahommedanism. The Dainyals, or diviners,
791 who are of both sexes but are more frequently women, are supposed to receive the gift of second sight by the shadow of a Barai, or fairy, having fallen on them in sleep. Dr. Leitner
B speaks of the gift as being supposed to be hereditary, but
787 this is not the case, though the daughters of Dainyals often become Dainyals also. Dainyals are said to be only found
791 among the shepherd population, and it is easy to understand how a solitary life among the wild crags of the Hindoo Koosh should encourage a belief in the power of intercourse with the unseen world. Quite young people become Dainyals, and the spirit of prophecy is supposed to remain with them for life.

The first intimation of the gift to the friends of the recipient is conveyed by their finding him or her in a deep trance. The requisite music is brought, flageolets being substituted for the ordinary clarionets, and softly modulated airs are played close to the ear of the entranced. Gradually he moves and begins to show signs of life, on which a goat is brought and decapitated, and the bleeding neck presented to the Dainyal novice. This is the test of a true Dainyal. If the gift of divination has really come to him, he seizes the bleeding neck, and sucks the blood. Some find this too much for them, and refusing to suck the blood are looked on afterwards as only feebly gifted with the spirit of prophecy. The idea of imposture never seems to be entertained by these simple-minded people. The recognised Dainyals are consulted on all special occasions, such as the yearly festivals in summer, or the declaration of war with a neighbouring state. The spirit of divination is supposed to lie dormant in winter, and to be strong in proportion to the heat of the weather.

On the first occasion of my witnessing an incantation, two Dainyals were brought from a considerable distance to prophesy at the Ganoni festival in June. They were both women, one of about twenty-five and the other about forty years of age, who showed by their wild and haggard looks the strain of the often-practised ceremony on their faculties. A circle

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Next to the Aiboi came the *Ganoni* feast, which celebrated the commencement of the wheat harvest. It is still kept up in Gilgit and all the neighbouring valleys. The day having been fixed with reference to the state of the crop, the last hour of day-light for the preceding ten days is spent in dancing on the Shawaran. At dusk on the evening before the festival, a member of every household gathers a handful of ears of corn. This is supposed to be done secretly. A few of the ears are hung over the door of the house, and the rest are roasted next morning and eaten steeped in milk. The day is passed in the usual rejoicings, and on the following day harvest operations are commenced. As some crops are always more forward than others, and ready to be reaped before the appointed day, no restriction is placed on their being cut; but to eat of the grain before the Ganoni would provoke ill-luck and misfortune. The festival is observed in Sirikol and Wakhan; in the latter place it is called *Shagit*. In Chitral it is called *Phindik*. The tribes in Torwal, Bushkar, and in the Indus Valley below Sazin do not observe it.

The next festival is the *Domenika*, "smoke-making," which celebrates the completion of the harvest. When the last crop of the autumn has been gathered, it is necessary to drive away evil spirits from the granaries. A kind of porridge called "mool" is eaten, and the head of the household takes his matchlock and fires it into the floor. Then, going outside, he sets to work loading and firing till his powder horn is exhausted, all his neighbours being similarly employed. The next day is spent in the usual rejoicings, part of which consists in firing at a sheep's head set up as a mark. In Chitral this festival is called *Justundikaik*, "devil-driving."

The last festival in the year, and the most important of all, is the *Chili*, which formerly celebrated the worship of the Chili tree (*Juniperus excelsa*), and marked the commencement of wheat-sowing. Within the last sixty years the rites connected with tree-worship have ceased, but the ceremonies connected with sowing are still maintained. The feast now lasts two days, beginning on the first day of the sun entering the sign of the Scorpion. The first is called the Ra's day, the second the people's day. The evening before the first day a procession goes to the Ra's granary, from which they receive between twenty and thirty pounds of the best wheat, which is placed in a skin mixed with sprigs of the sacred *chili* tree. A large bonfire of the sacred cedar wood is lighted, and the quantity of wheat to be used in the next

Mrs Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 ~~AUS Afghanistan AUS~~
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then took some of the leaves, and pouring wine and water on them placed them on the fire, and the rest were sprinkled with flour and suspended from the ceiling. She then sprinkled flour on her husband's head and shoulders, and addressed him thus:—"Ai Shiri Bagerthum, son of the fairies, you have come from far!" *Shiri Bagerthum*, "the dreadful king," being the form of address to the cedar when praying for wants to be fulfilled. The next day the wife baked a number of cakes, and, taking them with her, drove the family goats to the Chili stone. When they were collected round the stone, she began to pelt them with pebbles, invoking the Chili at the same time. According to the direction in which the goats ran off, omens were drawn as to the number and sex of the kids expected during the ensuing year. Walnuts and pomegranates were then placed on the Chili stone, the cakes were distributed and eaten, and the goats followed to pasture in whatever direction they showed a disposition to go. For five days afterwards this song was sung in all the houses:— 782 782 539

Dread Fairy King, I sacrifice before you,
How nobly do you stand! you have filled up my house,
You have brought me a wife when I had not one,
Instead of daughters you have given me sons.
You have shown me the ways of right,
You have given me many children,
You have made me like the mountain,
I have brought the family of the mountain tops,
I have gone to Sargin Gilit,
That I might see the people.
You slay many wild goats,
You with the gun on your shoulder,
Oh you with the sword in your hand!
Oh you riding upon a horse!
Oh you clothed in a fine robe!
Dread king, I will slay you a ram.
Oh you that have come from the mountain,
I will rub your feet with butter.
Oh you that have come from below,
I will anoint you with oil.
I have been to the wide plain,
They have slain you a fine he-goat,
A ram has been slain, I have honoured you to-day,
To-morrow you will depart.
Go, dread Fairy King, I salute you,
You have given me prosperity,
How shall I let you depart!

The Chili stone is still to be seen at the entrance of every Shin village. [778]

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D 762 178 It is also a matter of accepted tradition in Gilgit, Gor, Hunza, and Nager, that suttee was formerly practised. The dead man, with his finest clothes and his weapons girded on him was placed on the pyre, and as the fire burnt up, the woman, arrayed in her jewellery and her richest clothes, leaped into the flames.

B 762 178 The burning of the dead ceased to be practised more than sixty years ago. One or two old men have told me D [764] that they could remember hearing it mentioned, as a not uncommon occurrence, in their youth, but none could recollect having witnessed any actual instance. So lately as in 1877, a very old man in Darel scandalised his neighbours by calling his sons to him on his death bed, and after having his arms and valuables brought to him, desiring to be burnt with them when dead. His wish, however, was not carried out. He and a man of Gor, who died twenty years ago, are known to have always refused to be circumcised, or to call themselves Mahommedans. They were probably the very last Hindoos in Dangaristan. Suttee was abolished earlier, and has certainly not been practised in Dangaristan for the last hundred years.

D 771 171 It is to be remarked that none of these customs, which savour so strongly of modern Hindooism, are to be found, either as now existing or as resting on former tradition, in any of the valleys to which the Shin rule did not extend; nor is the term Dangarik applied in any cases except those mentioned. The difference between some types of Hindooism and Buddhism is not necessarily very great, but the existence of customs among them, not shared by their neighbours, the establishment of a caste system, the use of the title of Ra for their rulers, and the common suffix of *Sing* to their own names, with the frequent use of Sanscrit terms, show that considerable differences exist between the Shins and their neighbours of the Swat, Punjkorah, and Chitral Valleys, with whose language their own has so much in common.

D 778 783 In spite of the more severe type of Mahommedanism which prevails, and which gathers strength year by year, idolatrous customs still survive. In every village in which Shins are in the majority, there is a large stone, which is still more or less the object of reverence. Each village has its own name for this stone, but an oath taken or an engagement made over it, is often held more binding than where the Koran is used. In several villages goats are still annually

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sacrificed beside the stone, which is sprinkled with blood, and in other places the practice has only lately been discontinued. Though the religion introduced by the Shins would appear to have been of a Brahminical type, it must have contained also a considerable amount of demon worship, as is shown by Mr. Shaw in his account of the Hanu Darda.

I have been told that when the Cashmere troops first occupied Gilgit, there was in the fort a slab of stone about 3 feet long, bearing a Sanscrit inscription. My informant told me that he had made out the words, "Ishwar ling murti," or, "the Lingum incarnation of Shiva," but that the rest of the inscription was illegible. In 1871 the fort was destroyed by an earthquake which exploded the powder magazine and reduced the whole to ruins. The present fort was erected on the same site, and the stone was doubtless built into the foundations. The names of many of the rulers and of a number of places, not only in the Indus and Gilgit Valleys, but also in the Chitral Valley, point to a Brahminical origin. Amongst the names of places may be mentioned *Sau* (Siva, *or* Mahadeo), *Shagram* (Siva's village), *Shogaur* (Siva's priest), and *Swami*. In the Hunza and Nager genealogies we find the names of *Lullithum* (the beautiful Thum), *Hurrithum*,[1] and *Bookhatthum*,[2] and one of the last independent Ras of Gilgit, Suleiman Khan, is best known by the name of *Gowrithum*.[3]

With all this evidence it can scarcely be doubted that some form of Brahminism was introduced by the Shins into the Gilgit Valley, and, to a greater or less degree, wherever their rule extended. In valleys in which they were out-numbered by the former inhabitants, the result was, doubtless, a mixture of Buddhism and Hindooism, grafted on a form of demon-worship already existing in the country. The religious practices of the Hanu Dards described by Mr. Shaw, probably approach most nearly to those which formerly existed in Gilgit and the neighbouring valleys, when under Shin rule.

The Shins seem to have introduced, along with their form of Hindooism, a piece of tree-worship, which has been already described. Though no longer an object of public worship, supplications are still addressed to the *Chili*, especially by women desirous of children, by burning its branches, and it is still regarded as possessing special powers of puri-

[1] From Hari, a name for Mahadeo.

[2] Probably a corruption of *Mookhattum*, referring to *Mukhut* "the final transmigration."

[3] From Gouri, the wife of Mahadeo.

The Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 Afghanistan-Kafir
4 AV3 David AV3 Burushe AV7

D 771 174 778 fication. It plays a conspicuous part in the incantations of the Dainyals, and on a great man entering a Shin village a pan of burning Chili branches is waved before him. On certain occasions both men and women saturate themselves with the smoke, which is of a particularly pungent nature.

D 171 778 B 171 178 The custom of Chili worship does not appear to have penetrated to Hunza or Nager, nor is any trace of it to be found in the Oxus Valley, in Chitral, or among the tribes of the Swat Valley; but among the Siah-Posh it seems to exist in almost the same form as it did among the Shins. Chili wood, or Padam, is still taken down to the Punjab to be used in Hindoo ceremonials. According to Colonel Prejevalski, the same tree is also held sacred by the Mongols and Tangutans, who burn the branches for incense during prayer time. At Hemis Shukpa, within 20 miles of Leh, a few trees of great age exist, and are held in much veneration by the Tartars of the village, though the tree is not generally an object of Tartar respect.[1] It may be that the feeling of veneration was imbibed from the Shins, whose influence must have extended nearly to Leh. It is still usual in Gilgit to sprinkle goat's blood on a tree of any kind before cutting it down.

D 771 171 B 771 171 The religion of the whole country is now some form of Mahommedanism, and in the immense knot of mountains of which Yassin forms the centre, three different types of the same religion have met, and are now striving for the mastery. From the south, Soonnee Moollahs have carried their tenets up the different valleys with more or less success. From the eastward a current of Shiah doctrines has set in from Iskardo; and from the westward the curious Maulai, or Muglee,[2] tenets have found their way up the Oxus Valley. It is to be noticed that the subversion of Hindooism by Mahommedanism in the remoter valleys seems to have been extremely gradual, and to have been more owing to gradual conversion than to persecution.

D 771 173 B 771 173 The genealogical tables of the present ruling families of Hunza, Nager, and Gilgit, enable a fair idea to be formed of the date of the introduction of Islam into the country. Tradition records the death of the Gilgit Ra with the non-Mussulman name of Shiri Buddutt,[3] at the hands of a stranger bearing the Mussulman name of Azru, or Azor, from whom the present Ra of Gilgit, and the Thums of Hunza and Nager, trace

[1] Henderson's *Lahore to Yarkund*, page 51.
[2] The common uneducated pronunciation.
[3] The meaning of the name is perhaps "Given by Sri Buddha."—*Sri Buddha Datta*

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D 715 C 715

The precepts and observances of the sect are difficult to ascertain, one of their sayings being that "a man should conceal his faith and his women;" and the little I have been able to ascertain is from Maulais who have proselytised, and those only men of no education.

Soonnees speak of them as "Kaffirs" and "Rafzi," but they themselves do not refuse to pray or eat with Soonnees. They are sometimes accused of worshipping Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, and accordingly styled "Ali-purust," and they undoubtedly esteem Ali, who, they say, was born of Light as superior to the Prophet Mahommed, and an incarnation of the deity. They reject the idea of a future state, believing in the transmigration of souls. Evil deeds are punished by the spirit being translated into a dog or other mean animal. Good actions are rewarded by a future incarnation as a great or holy man. They claim little in common with other sects of Mahommedans, saying, the Soonnee is a dog and the Shiah is an ass. They question the divine character of the Koran, though they say that it was entrusted to the Angel Gabriel to give to Ali, but that he gave it by mistake to Mahommed.

They use in place of the Koran a book called the Kalam-i-Pir, a Persian work, which is shown to none but men of their faith. The precept most commonly quoted by them is, that a man should blind himself, so that he should not be moved with envy at sight of his neighbour's prosperity; he should weaken his hands, so that they can grasp nothing belonging to others; and lame himself, that he may be unable to disobey the commands of his Pir. Cattle that have strayed into standing crops are not to be driven out till they have satisfied themselves. A good Maulai is already as one dead, prayers therefore are unnecessary, as also is fasting. If any forcible attempt should be made to cause a Maulai to fast, he should resist it by devouring a pinch of dust. The only pilgrimage enjoined is to the living head of their faith, who is styled the Imam-i-Zeman, or Sahib-i-Zeman. Marriage can be performed by any man whose beard is white. Seating himself with the bridegroom on his right hand and the bride on his left, he takes a few pieces of roasted sheep's liver in both hands, and crossing his arms gives them to the man with his left hand and to the woman with his right. Then taking a cup of water he gives half to the woman, and after he has said a few words out of the Kalam-i-Pir, the ceremony is completed. The form of the Maulai Kalma is

Dard Arch

CHAPTER VIII

WAR-LORE AND SPORT

788 The folk-lore and the festivals are most interesting, but for want of time I could not follow up the researches I should have loved to make. Vestiges of dead faiths meet you at every turn. Fires blaze at certain seasons on the hill-sides and on the mountain tops, and remind you that what we call fire-worship originated but a stone's-throw to the north on the
• 778 other side of the Hindu-Kush. The cedar, sacred in
[778] Kafiristan, and still exported to India for Hindu ceremonials, is sacred here: outside every village almost is a stone altar yet visited by the women, the names of the village gods are remembered, often surreptitiously invoked, and soothsayers and witch-
789 craft abound. Some little distance up the Chaprot nullà is a clear spring of water, and if a piece of cowskin is thrown into this, by order of the Thum of Hunza, to the accompaniment of suitable incantations, the heavens are immediately obscured with clouds, and the most dreadful storms rage over the district, to the terror and danger of the obnoxious wayfarer or invader. I was solemnly warned on more than one occasion against this particular power for evil possessed by

4a Durand G-3 (1888-92) 1900 AVI Kashmir
Dard AVI

which the juice had poured, were still in their places.

For several miles the road runs up the narrow gulley between what was a lateral moraine and the hillside, not a drop of water is passed, not a tree or glimpse of vegetation is to be seen, not a sound is heard save the ring of one's horse's hoofs on the burning rock, for the stream frets a thousand feet below; not a sign of life is there, but perhaps the passing shadow of an eagle. I had been riding slowly on, lost in a reverie, my horse picking his own way, when there came a sudden change. There was a sharp turn in the path which led into a deep ravine cut by a side stream, and then rose in sharp zigzags to gain the crest of the opposite bank. The moment I turned the corner a shot rang out, the edge of the cliff "sprung to life with armed men," and a rapid *feu de joie* rippled along the crest above me. Arrived at the top I was met by the village elders, was incensed with the smoke from a platter of burning cedar twigs, and presented with a flat unleavened cake soaked in clarified butter, the local variant for bread and salt. As I broke a piece and ate it, I noticed that the bread itself was apparently consecrated, sprays of the sacred cedar lying on the dish on which it was carried.

I spent some days making friends with the people, and visiting every yard of their watercourses, which were, as usual, a monument of patient skill. To carry water channels across the face of perpendicular conglomerate cliffs cut out of moraines by the action of a stream which rages below, sometimes impinging on one bank, sometimes on the other, is no easy

10. the Liddar valley — Analysis

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

matter even for that most handy of creatures, the Royal Engineer, however well he may be equipped. For the poor villager it is a labour of Sisyphus. The stream is always cutting away a frail prop, undermining a high retaining wall, breaking the side of the water channel, or washing away the intake headworks, and the work has to be done all over again. Truly, the people compelled one's admiration by their steadfast patience and determination, and filled one with a desire to help them in every way in their desperate fight with nature.

As I passed through a stretch of abandoned cultivation given up to the barberry, the wild pomegranate, and the brier rose, we stumbled on a time-worn altar, the stones of which attested its great age. It was covered with a few cedar boughs, others lay scattered around as the wind had displaced them, and the men with me said it was the shrine of the village god, and that these were the offerings of women who had come to pray. It was a scene which made a vivid impression on me. Far away above us, the culminating point of the valley, rose a snow peak against a bright blue sky, open hillsides fell back on each hand, swept by a fresh spring wind, patches of bright cultivation lay across the stream whose voice rose from the gorge to our left, but no house marred the view. Before us, backed by the silent terraced fields of a dead generation, lay the little altar of a dead faith. And yet one felt it was not dead; the great god Pan laid his hand upon one's heart, all nature was filled by his presence, and one felt the impulse which brought the women there to offer their humble

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

sacrifice to the living god of the stream and the hillside rather than turn to the cold deity of Mahomedanism, so essentially the god for men, and not for women. I replaced the scattered boughs, and invoked peace and prosperity on the stricken valley.

Above the village where we were camped was a conical hill inhabited by the local fairies. It is easy to realise how certain their existence is to the people. It always seems to me that it is only in the heart of the great mountains, thousands of feet above the last trace of human habitation, when you lie by some time-worn rock, lulled by a silence which can be felt, and gazing at the eternal snows, that the real voice of Nature speaks to you. Then truly do the heavens declare the glory of God; you feel the pulse of the All-pervading Presence, the beauty and sublimity of Nature sink into your soul, and for the moment the mysterious veil which falls between us and the light wavers and half fades away. If Nature so speaks to us what must she say to men and children who spend days and weeks of absolute solitude on the mountain sides. A simple mountain people must have a simple faith, must bow to visible and tangible deities, not to abstract objects of pious belief. It needs the pure clear skies of the desert to produce a race which can recognise that "there is no god but God," centuries of high civilisation working on the acute and introspective Indo-Aryan mind are required to produce the Buddha. The gods of the valley and the mountain, of the mist and forest, the dwellers in the glacier and the

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

rose, and stood facing the orchestra, leaning her hand upon a drum. Bare-headed, her long black hair streaming down her back, she stood swaying slowly backwards and forwards to the accompaniment of low music from the band; gradually the band played faster and faster, the swaying quickened, until it seemed as if her neck must be dislocated by the violence of her movements, and her locks stretched to their full extent threshed in a heavy mass, at one moment over her face and bosom, the next down her back to her waist. She looked horrible, a very Mænad. Suddenly she ceased, and stood as if dazed. Then with slow and faltering step she began to wander round the circle, keeping the spectators on her right hand. The pace gradually increased until she danced round, the band keeping time to her every motion. The fairy hill lay to the north-west of the place where we were sitting, and her eyes were constantly fixed in its direction as she came round the circle and faced towards it. 787 791 [778]

I watched her very carefully, and for some time failed to detect anything but an expression of entire abstraction from her surroundings, till, in one of her circlings, she suddenly shot a glance at us, which showed that, however much the fairies possessed her, she was still fully conscious of our presence. At last, after many weary wanderings, she halted by the band, the music of which dropped to the faintest murmur, and listened first to a pipe then to a drum for the fairy voice, to be heard only by her. There was a slight pause, and then she sang a couplet, which was taken up and repeated by the village elders, who